

funding and supporting health care for our veterans; by passing and implementing a new GI Bill of Rights, which meets the needs of our soldiers and veterans in the 21st century; by realizing our troops lived with the creed that they would leave no one behind in battle and we must leave no veteran behind in addressing wounds suffered on our behalf.

I am proud to support this resolution to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Let our prayers be filled with thankfulness. Let our words be replete with commemorations. And let our deeds be worthy of the sacrifice of the great Americans who answered the call in our darkest hours.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CITY OF HILLSBORO, OREGON

HON. DAVID WU

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2005

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the City of Hillsboro, Oregon and celebrate the dedication of its new Civic Center on July 16, 2005. On this special occasion, I would not only like to reflect upon Hillsboro and Oregon's proud heritage, but the vision of the future that made it possible.

As the Pacific Northwest celebrates the bicentennial anniversary of the achievements of Lewis and Clark and the Corp of Discovery, I find it fitting that Hillsboro is bravely and confidently launching ahead its own future by implementing the Hillsboro 2020 Vision and Action Plan. Mayor Tom Hughes, the Hillsboro City Council, Hillsboro's citizens and various community organizations came together to determine what their community should look like in the coming decades. This forward-thinking plan, like the new Hillsboro Civic Center, will lay the foundation for decades of growth, civic engagement, environmental conservation, and economic prosperity.

America looks to the future with the same pioneering spirit that guided the Corps of Discovery. As we celebrate our return to space with the launch of the Space Shuttle *Discovery*, Hillsboro, a city born from that same pioneering spirit, also celebrates its own launch towards a future of its own making. By focusing on environmentally sustainable designs, the Hillsboro Civic Center is a triumph to conservation, using 100 percent renewable energy in its electricity, 90 percent recycled building material, and the most modern of construction techniques with certified wood from local sustainable forests.

The building techniques and energy efficient design used in construction of the Hillsboro Civic Center earned it a GOLD rating, the highest standard awarded by LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design).

I applaud Mayor Hughes, the Hillsboro City Council, and citizens of Hillsboro for their vision and commitment to their community, the environment, and the future development of Oregon.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2005

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, on July 11, 2005, I was in my district participating in the first meeting of the New Jersey Flood Mitigation Task Force. This Task Force is working to help prevent the devastating flooding that occurred for a number of my constituents earlier this year. Due to the schedule, I missed roll-call votes Nos. 363 and 364. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: rollcall No. 363 "aye" and rollcall No. 364 "aye."

CHINA NATIONAL OFFSHORE OIL CORPORATION LTD'S TAKEOVER BID FOR UNOCAL CORPORATION OF CALIFORNIA

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2005

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD a letter I sent on July 13 to the law firm Akin Gump outlining my concerns with regard to the firm's representation of China National Offshore Oil Corporation Ltd. (CNOOC) in its takeover bid for Unocal Corp. of California.

A critical element that has been absent in much of the discussion surrounding free trade is the fact that CNOOC is not a private foreign company. It is a Chinese state-run entity—70 percent state-owned.

Let there be any confusion about who we are dealing with when we speak of the Chinese Communist government, I want to highlight a quote from a July 13 Washington Post article. An adviser to the Chinese central government, who spoke on the condition of anonymity fearing government disciplinary action, said, "No matter if it's rogue or a friend's oil, we don't care. Human rights? We don't care. We care about oil. Whether Iran would have nuclear weapons or not is not our business. America cares, but Iran is not our neighbor. Anyone who helps China with energy is a friend."

Is there no bright line to separate who the lobbyists in Washington will or will not represent?

Mr. R. BRUCE MCLEAN,
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, New Hampshire Ave NW., Washington DC.

DEAR MR. MCLEAN: I write today in response to a packet of information I received in late June, which included a letter from the chief executive officer of China National Offshore Oil Corporation Ltd. (CNOOC) peppered with assurances, aimed at easing growing congressional concern, that CNOOC's bid to "merge" with Unocal Corp. of California was in fact friendly. I must say in all candor that I was shocked that the packet arrived courtesy of Akin Gump—one of Washington's most distinguished and reputable lobbying and law firms.

Having worked in Washington for over three decades, I understand that lobbying is part and parcel of everyday life in the nation's capital. Every day, good people walk the halls of Congress making the case for

their constituency, advocating on any number of issues and causes with great passion and insight. That said, when I noted that CNOOC was one of your newest clients, I immediately thought, "Is there no bright line to separate who the lobbyists in Washington will or will not represent?"

A critical part of the discussion recently surrounding the free market, charges of protectionism and the politicization of trade within the context of CNOOC's takeover bid for Unocal is that CNOOC is not a private foreign company. CNOOC is a Chinese state-run entity—70 percent state-owned. At the end of the day, it has to be obvious that any decisions on the issues of energy, economic and ultimately national security regarding the operations of this company will be based on what is advantageous to the Chinese Communist government. It is noteworthy that a Pentagon report released in January by the Office of Net Assessment has warned that China's need for oil, gas and other energy resources appears to be driving the country toward becoming an expansionist power.

As Irwin Stelzer with the Hudson Institute recently wrote, "China has decided to use its state resources to convert its major companies into important multi-nationals—part of an aggressive policy of projecting Chinese power on a global basis. If that's not political, nothing is . . . That policy is most noticeable in oil markets. China's acquisition of Unocal's substantial Asian assets will increase its political influence in that part of the world."

But we need not look to "inside the Beltway" policy analysts for insight into China's global ambitions. Chen Yonglin, the high ranking Chinese defector with intimate knowledge of China's worldwide intelligence gathering efforts, has said, "The United States is considered by the Chinese Communist Party as the largest enemy, the major strategic rival."

I recall with great irony the heated annual debates in Congress surrounding Most Favored Nation trade status and ultimately Permanent Normal Trade Relations for China. The coalition that battled granting China this privilege faced an almost certain perennial loss. Even so, it served as a valuable forum in which to highlight just what kind of a country we are dealing with in China. The list of egregious actions laid at the feet of the Communist government of the People's Republic of China is long and spans decades—human rights abuses, religious persecution including torture and imprisonment, slave labor practices, forced sterilization, espionage operations against U.S. businesses, software piracy and intellectual property theft, military spying. At the time many argued with tremendous passion, business interests foremost among them, that trade with China would change China, not the other way around.

But recent reports have painted a grim picture of the purported "information age" in China. Chinese bloggers who have the audacity to type in words like "freedom," "democracy," or "human rights" receive a message, courtesy of Microsoft software, that says, "Prohibited language in text, please delete." It seems China is changing us after all.

And the change is perhaps no where more apparent than in the willingness of American companies and lobbyists to do the bidding of the Chinese government—a government which despite increased "engagement" over the last several years continues to pose a national security threat, blatantly disrespects free trade norms, persistently violates human rights, consistently stifles political dissent and is indiscriminate in its repression, arrest and torture of varied faiths targeting the Uygher Muslim population, the underground Protestant and Catholic house

churches, the Tibetan Buddhists and the Falun Gong spiritual movement.

I am left to wonder if it was Akin Gump which counseled CNOOC, and ultimately the Chinese government, to first caution President Bush not to politicize the Unocal takeover bid, and then warn Congress to "correct its mistaken ways of politicizing economic and trade issues and stop interfering in the normal commercial exchanges between enterprises of the two countries."

Ultimately, I question the appropriateness of an American firm advising and being on the payroll of the Chinese government. In my opinion, their interests, and all which that encompasses, are simply not deserving of your representation and only serve to degrade the strong reputation for integrity your firm has enjoyed over the years.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

P.S. During the presidency of Ronald Reagan, no major law firm or lobbying organization would have represented the Soviet Union if it had tried to take over an American oil company.

VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER SINGH JOINT SESSION

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2005

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who will be addressing a joint session of Congress next week.

I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Singh at a dinner in April 2002 at the U.S. Embassy. An Oxford economist by training, Prime Minister Singh ushered in a new era of economic liberalization in India. Through slashing red tape and eliminating bureaucracy, he cut India's deficit and opened the economy, leading to India's status as a primary figure in the global economy.

I have had the opportunity to visit India three times, and led 13 of my colleagues to visit India for their first time. In my own district, we boast the 2nd largest South Asian community in the country.

On behalf of the merchants of Little India on 74th Street in Jackson Heights in my district, and as the former co-chair of the India Caucus, I look forward to the Prime Minister's remarks and congratulate him and the Indian American Community for the historic address.

BUILDING BETTER RELATIONS WITH AFRO-COLOMBIANS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to the attention of my colleagues an important visit by a delegation of Afro-Colombian leaders to Washington this week. The Vice President of the Colombian House of Representatives, the Honorable Dr. Edgar Torres, and the Governor of Chocó, the Honorable Dr. Julio Ibagüen are the leaders of this auspicious delegation. These Afro-Colombian leaders have come to the United States to raise the

awareness of the conditions of the Afro-Colombian community in Colombia, most specifically the province of Chocó, and to request congressional assistance in obtaining and directing resources to the problems of this community.

Representing a quarter of Colombia's population, Afro-Colombians are two-thirds of the nation's extreme poor, have illiteracy of 45 percent, and have inadequate access to health care. They have lower standards of living than most other groups in Colombia. They often live in isolated and remote communities with little access for advancement and improvement.

As a leader in the legislative chamber, Dr. Torres is one of the most influential Afro-Colombians in the nation and has worked to raise awareness of the struggle of Afro-Colombians. He has championed and pursued greater multinational awareness and assistance for the people of Colombia. He has worked to raise the issue to the global community of the impoverishment and challenges facing his people. Dr. Torres has been a powerful, important and poignant voice for the struggle and desire for equality among Afro-Colombians.

The department of Chocó has the highest percentage of Afro-Colombians in the country. It also has the lowest per-capita level of government investment in health, education, and infrastructure. The people of Chocó suffer daily with poverty, illiteracy, lack of medical care, and lack of opportunity. They have great plans for advancement but little opportunity.

Governor Ibagüen has worked to improve the infrastructure for the province. He has advanced plans and strategies designed to provide new hope and opportunity to the people of Chocó and to address the pressing and urgent needs of the community. He has seen firsthand the hardship and misery of Afro-Colombians and works with local, national, and international agencies to overcome these daunting challenges. He nonetheless could use the assistance and aid of the 109th Congress and the American people.

These Afro-Colombian leaders are here in Washington to build a dialogue with the international community on behalf of the people of Colombia. They are trying to find allies and alliances with leaders of this country and the international community to help wage the fight for self-sufficiency and equal treatment of Afro-Colombians. They should be commended in their efforts to reach out and ask for our assistance. We should be gracious in our commitment to help their cause. They are trying to reach out to us and we must be prepared to respond.

There are a number of opportunities available to this Congress to reach out to the Colombian people, and Afro-Colombians in particular. In August, there will be a dialogue hosted in Colombia to raise the awareness of the Afro-Colombian challenge. I and other members of the Congressional Black Caucus have extended our support to these efforts and I hope my colleagues in the House will join us. My colleague, the Honorable GREGORY MEEKS, is already planning a congressional delegation to visit the country and to participate in the dialogue on race.

In addition to these congressional activities, the Pan American Development Foundation and the Afro-Latino Development Alliance are providing important information, awareness,

and assistance to the Afro-Colombian struggle. They are hosting Dr. Torres and Dr. Ibagüen in their visit and tour this week. They have played an indomitable role in finding opportunities for assisting Afro-Colombians. I expect that these organizations will continue their hard work on behalf of Afro-Colombians.

The United States has provided substantial assistance to the Government of Colombia, most of it through Plan Colombia to assist the Government of Colombia in waging war against political insurgents and narcotics traffickers. The Afro-Colombian delegation believes that a shift in resources from military to economic development purposes in communities such as the Chocó province will achieve greater success than our military assistance.

It is important that this Congress take action to help the Afro-Colombian people. It is unconscionable to think that an entire group of people would suffer in this manner in this day and age. We must do more as the representatives of this caring and loving nation. I urge my colleagues to reach out to Dr. Torres and Dr. Ibagüen while they are here this week. I urge my colleagues to extend aid and assistance to Afro-Colombian populations.

I have introduced the following resolution (House Concurrent Resolution 175) to encourage greater assistance and recognition to Afro-descendant populations throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. This resolution is another step in addressing the Afro-Colombian struggle. I submit this copy of the resolution into the RECORD.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Acknowledging African descendants of the transatlantic slave trade in all of the Americas with an emphasis on descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean, recognizing the injustices suffered by these African descendants, and recommending that the United States and the international community work to improve the situation of Afro-descendant communities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Whereas during Black History Month it is important that we not forget that African-Americans are not the only survivors of the transatlantic slave trade;

Whereas like the United States, many European nations benefited greatly from the colonization of Latin America and the Caribbean and their participation in the slave trade;

Whereas the story of African descendants in all of the Americas remains untold, leading them to be forgotten, made invisible, and allowed to suffer unjustly;

Whereas it is important to acknowledge that as a result of the slave trade and immigration, approximately 80,000,000 to 150,000,000 persons of African descent live in Latin America and the Caribbean, making them the largest population of persons of African descent outside of Africa;

Whereas Afro-descendants are present in most all Latin American countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela;

Whereas the size of Afro-descendant populations vary in range from less than 1 percent in some countries to as much as 30 percent in Colombia and 46 percent in Brazil and make up the majority in some Spanish speaking Caribbean nations, such as Cuba and the Dominican Republic;

Whereas Afro-descendant populations have made significant economic, social, and cultural contributions to their countries and the Western Hemisphere from their unfortunate involvement in the transatlantic slave